CONFERENCE connection
Alabama · Georgia
Mississippi · South Carolina · Tennessee · NW Florida
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

April 1, 2019

Getting to Know One Another

Grace to you and Peace! One of the joys I experience is worshipping with different congregations within the Conference. Our churches are amazing! I must admit that it makes me proud to be part of the Southeast Conference! But I wonder about ways that churches can know about each other so that they too can celebrate who we are. In my visits, I discovered one way...

I would like to share with you a practice that I witnessed at Spirit of the Cross Church in Huntsville, AL. Since they are relatively new to the Conference, their pastor Rev. Richard Barham, has been working to help the congregation know more about the other churches in the Conference.

Therefore, prior to each Sunday, he draws the name of a church in the Conference from a basket. Then he checks the church's website and contacts the pastor to know more about that church and its ministry. He also lets the pastor know that the church will be in the prayers of Spirit of the Cross that Sunday. Pastor Barham then includes a short paragraph about the selected church in the bulletin for Sunday, talks about that church during the worship service and lifts them up in prayer. In addition, a card addressed to the church that was lifted up in prayer, is distributed throughout the congregation for people to sign indicating that they prayed for the church. The card is then sent to that church.

This is a wonderful way for a congregation to learn about another

congregation. But there is more... One of our pastors who received a card signed by the congregation at Spirit of the Cross noted that it meant a lot to his congregation; to know about the connection and prayers lifted up by the Spirit of the Cross Church.

What if all of our churches did this? It is a great way to discover the amazing churches that are part of the Southeast Conference!

Blessings!
Char

News from the Conference Office

Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2019. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

Week of April 1

- Deer Lodge Congregational UCC; Deer Lodge, Tennessee
- James Banks
- Marie Fortune
- Laurie Robins
- Jeane Spoor

Week of April 8

- Open Table; Mobile, Alabama
- Susannah Davis
- Dorothea Lotze-Kola
- Matt Laney
- Stephen Sterner

In Our Prayers

- We hold in prayer the family of **Rev. Paul Hackett**, pastor of **Church of the Savior** (our former UCC congregation in Alpharetta, GA) who died on March 23, 2019. A celebration of life was held on Saturday, March 30.

Churches in Transition

Central Congregational, Atlanta, GA; United Church of Huntsville, Huntsville AL; First Congregational, Birmingham AL; Pilgrimage, Marietta GA; First Congregational Christian, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA

Opportunities within the Southeast Conference

The Southeast Conference is strong when people are involved!

Would you like to be considered to be on the Conference Board of Directors or a member of a Standing Committee of the Board (Nominating Committee, Commission on Ministry, Personnel Committee, Stewardship & Finance Committee)?

Some of these positions are elected by the Conference and some are appointed by the Board. Either way, we would LOVE to have you join us to make us stronger!

Complete a Nomination Form today! (Fillable PDF or Microsoft Word).

"Coffee with Char" *(a virtual conversation)*

All authorized ministers are again invited to “have coffee” with Char through our virtual technology. Our focus question will be “what are the values that define us as a Conference?” We will use our Zoom meeting platform, which provides room for 50 people to gather, either through the computer or on the phone.

There are two coffee hours set up:

- Tuesday, April 30 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern time (Reserve a spot)
- Thursday, May 2 at 10:00 a.m. Eastern time (Reserve a spot)

After you have made a reservation, you will receive an email a few days prior to the reserved date providing you with the link for the connection.

Remember that this can be done via phone, without the need to use a computer. If you need assistance making a “reservation” please contact Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org or 404-719-6572. Come and join with your colleagues in conversation!

Conference Pulpit Supply List

We often get requests from churches for ministers available to “fill the pulpit” for a Sunday. We would like to create a list to be placed on the Conference website to assist churches. If you are interested in preaching occasionally, please complete this online form. Contact Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org with any questions you may have. Thank you!

Conference Disaster Team Forming

We all know that natural disasters happen and we want to be helpful and supportive when it does. We also know that there are things we can do to prepare for disasters before they happen. The United Church of Christ has a network of Conference Disaster Coordinators and Teams across the denomination. For the Southeast Conference, such individuals become the "ears, eyes, and hands" to help us respond to situations within the Conference.

We are looking for individuals located in various parts of the Conference to serve on a Disaster Team: checking in with churches following disasters. We are also looking for a Conference Disaster Coordinator who will coordinate the Team, learn about and stay connected to the UCC Disaster Ministries, and consider ways of working ecumenically within our geographical area. These are volunteer positions that can have a significant impact on our Conference's ability to respond to our churches when disaster hits.

If you are interested or want more information, contact Char Burch, Transitional Conference Minister, through email: cburch@secucc.org or 404-615-2492.

From the Generosity Coordinator

God calls us to the work of strengthening the interconnected threads. "Whatever affects one of us directly affects all of us indirectly." (MLK) We are all in this, together.

It is TOGETHER that we learn, we grow and we love. We learn to rely on GOD with a spirit of mutuality as we strive to build faithful leaders and vital communities in all of our churches, all proclaiming a radical welcome that embraces ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN!!! Our focus is on leadership and development and congregational vitality, yet the scope of our ministries and our visions are much wider.

Your OCWM (Our Churches Wider Mission) dollars make all these initiatives possible. We remain grateful for all the ways you continue to support the Southeast Conference United Church of Church.

Come, let us reason...TOGETHER. Please continue to invite me to your church, so that we may discuss ways that we can make this conference stronger. We are BETTER TOGETHER.

Blessings as we journey, TOGETHER,
Min. Carrole Moss

2019 Annual Meeting

Southeast Conference Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 30 to Sunday, June 2

NEW LOCATION for 2019!
Pleasant Hill Community Church, Tennessee

Registration Now Open for Annual Meeting 53!

Please join us for the Southeast Conference's 53rd Annual Meeting at Pleasant Hill , TN May 31st- June 2nd. Rev. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ is our special guest this year. Along with our special guest and business meeting we will be offering a number of workshops including "How to Create a Green Team, Supporting Members in Discernment, and How Does the UCC Work?" Plus many more!

Every church is invited to bring three delegates plus a delegate for each additional 100 members. All Authorized Ministers who hold standing in the Southeast Conference have voice and vote in the meeting. Churches are also welcome to bring as many guests as they would like so please come and bring a guest or two! We need your voice and you to make this a meaningful Annual Meeting. Hope to see you there!

REGISTER TODAY

Announcements in Annual Meeting Program

We will again have the opportunity for churches and UCC affiliated ministries to have announcements or ads in the Annual Meeting booklet for Annual Meeting 2019. Is there an event coming up your church would like to invite the conference to? A special celebration to lift up? Announcements cost $25 for a quarter page, $50 for a half page, and $100 for a full page. Discounts available based on church size. Please email Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org for more details. The deadline for submitting an advertisement is April 30, 2019.

Expo at Annual Meeting

Calling all people, businesses, or UCC affiliated entities that would like to have a table at the Expo at the Southeast Conference's Annual Meeting May 30th- June 1st. This year we are opening up our Expo to crafters and non-profits as well as UCC affiliated entities.

- Have you written a book?
- Does your church sell Fair Trade items?
- Do you make stoles?
- Design websites for churches and non-profits?
- Offer educational opportunities for clergy or lay leadership?

A table at the Expo might be for you! If you are interested in reserving a table, please contact email Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org.

News from the Wider Church

Join General Synod 32 in an *All Church Read*

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Matthew Desmond, winner of numerous awards for his book which chronicles the lives of several families in the poorest neighborhoods in Milwaukee, will be the keynote speaker at the the United Church of Christ General Synod 32 in June. *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, a New York Times Bestseller, will also be the subject of the denomination's 2019 All Church Read.

Ninth Annual Retired Servants Retreat

Retired UCC Clergy, Missionaries, Volunteer Ministry Workers and Spouses of the Southeast and Southern Conferences of the United Church of Christ: you're invited to the 9th Annual Retired UCC Servants Retreat at Blowing Rock Conference Center. Save the dates of Mon-Wed, October 7-9, 2019. More details on our website.

Applications for the Adese 2020 Fellowship Available

This groundbreaking, ecumenical program will engage participants in theological reflection and business development as they create enterprises that help their communities follow the way of Jesus and live into God's

economy. The all-expenses-paid, 12-month program will maximize the capacity of fellows to build sustainable ventures that counter systemic poverty. While Adese is an initiative of the United Church of Christ, the program welcomes applications from any faith-driven entrepreneur who is committed to a just world for all. The Adese Fellowship successfully launched in 2018. Learn more about the 2018 Adese Fellows.

UCCDM Issues Call for 2019 Synod Awards

The United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries (UCCDM) has a tradition of presenting awards at the biennial General Synod. The UCCDM Awards recognize the contributions of congregations, other church settings, and individuals who have contributed to the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of the life of the church. Nominations are now open for the UCCDM Awards which will be announced at the Health and Wholeness Luncheon at General Synod 2019 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Learn more.

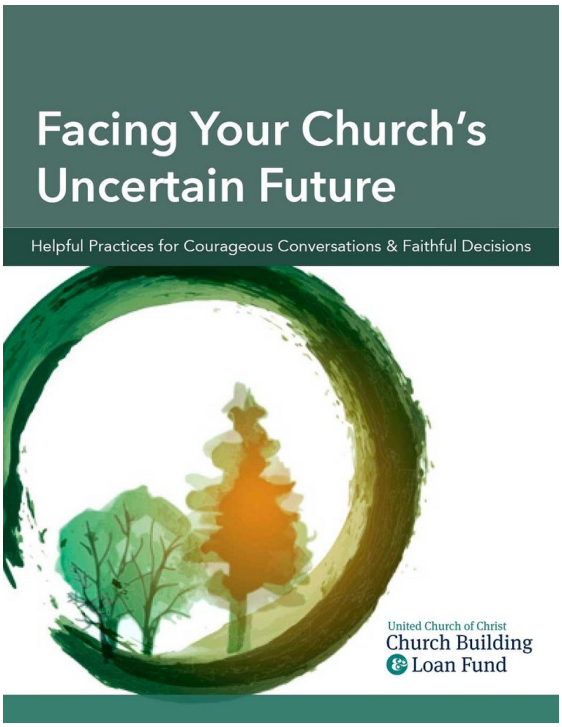
Facing Your Church's Uncertain Future

Helpful Practices for Courageous Conversations & Faithful Decisions

Unfortunately, some churches are facing their own uncertain futures and are in need of conversation in order to consider their next most faithful steps. Ministry in these congregations calls for faithful, honest (and often difficult) conversations that pastors and/or their congregations might sadly avoid.

"Facing Your Church's Uncertain Future" is a NEW resource from the UCC and the Church Building and Loan Fund that offers good practices for discerning, discussing, and making decisions that concern a church's future.

Download the worship resources for FREE, and for a limited time, purchase the entire resource (either print or download) for $9.99.


Facing Your Church's Uncertain Future
Helpful Practices for Courageous Conversations & Faithful Decisions
United Church of Christ
Church Building
Loan Fund

News from Our Local Congregations

National Wildlife Federation Certifies New Wildlife Habitat in Uplands Village

by Louise Mallory-Elliott

We have a unique tradition at Uplands Village Life Plan Retirement Community on the Cumberland Plateau in East Tennessee. Many of us who have congregated in this rural setting are self-driven individuals who care about the values of service to others and environmental stewardship. Our community supports a Wellness Center for rehabilitation and memory care, a long term care home, and an assisted living center, as well as 166 independent living homes, duplexes, and apartments. But

almost 65% of our 500 acres are devoted to the preservation of wildlife. Read more.

Rev. Brice Thomas Interviewed on Nashville TV

The pastor of Holy Trinity Community Church in Nashville, Rev. Dr. Brice Thomas, was recently interviewed on Nashville's "Out and About Today" talk show on the CBS affiliate Channel 5+. The show addressed how United Methodist and Catholic churches struggle with the issue with potentially serious and harmful effects on and to the LGBTQ community. Watch the video online.

2019 Heifer Field Trip: Ending Hunger and Poverty

Pleasant Hill Community Church (PHCC) gathered together 16 senior adults for a 'Field Trip' to Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Arkansas, March 11-14, 2019. Pleasant Hill's 4-day visit included a Heifer USA welcome session about Arkansas farming, 3 overnights in ranch lodging, a program on "Heifer Ranch, Scaling Up! Growing Food, Farmers and Community", 7 meals of ranch raised food in the dining hall, a ranch overview welcome and Global Village guided walking tour, talks on Goat Milking, Soap Making, and CSA Gardening, a Ranch Hay Wagon guided tour, Heifer DVD viewings, and a session on Heifer's past accomplishments, its current challenges, and the future of Heifer Accelerate! Read more on our website.

First Congregational Atlanta Visits Montgomery

The Men's Fellowship of First Congregational Church of Atlanta hosted a tour of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, AL on Saturday, March 30, 2019. 43 guests toured the Memorial and Legacy Museum, dedicated to the over 4400 African-American men, women and children lynched in this country between 1877 and 1950. A discussion lead by Dr.'s Desiree Pedescleaux and Paul Grant was conducted during lunch at The Central Restaurant following our tour of the Memorial.

We love sharing news from our local congregations! Please send us pictures and explanations of special events at your church that we can share on our website, social media, and in this email newsletter. We think it's a great way to share ideas for events, as well as celebrating what other UCC churches are doing!
Email us at communications@secucc.org**.**

Training and Learning Opportunities

Boundary Training 101 Scheduled for May 30, 2019

by Carrole Moss

Date: May 30, 2019
Place: Pleasant Hill Community UCC
Event: Healthy Boundary Training 101
Time: 12:00 noon until 8:00pm

Did you know that it is now a **REQUIREMENT that all Ordained, Licensed and Commissioned clergy** serving in the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ complete this training by December 2019? As of January 1, 2018 it has been mandated that all clergy attend this training and follow up every four years for a refresher course. This course will help you to learn or, refresh you on what your boundaries are, appropriate and inappropriate behavior, not just in the pulpit, but in your everyday life. It helps you with relationships, self care, social media and other issues.

There are stories of misconduct by clergy in the news, on social media, in our conversations, and on our minds, every day. Please **DO NOT** allow your name and your story to become a part of the media circus. Times have changed, people have changed...the conduct that was tolerated 10-20 years ago is no longer acceptable. Please help us to help you by making plans to attend this training. Remember: **Healthy Boundary Training is MANDATORY!!!**

The registration will be open in a few weeks on our website: secucc.org. We urge you to make plans to be there. It is our promise that you will be informed and enlightened. When we know better, we do better!!! Come, let us grow together. I look forward to seeing you there.

UCC Service Communities

Summer Communities of Service www.ucc.org/volunteer_scos
10 weeks; Age 19+; Placements for the summer are happening now. Serve at the intersection of faith communities and social justice. Serve local communities throughout the U.S. in long-term disaster recovery, food justice through community gardening and economic equity through children's enrichment. Reflect on action and be part of an intentional community. Travel, Housing, Living Stipend, and Health Insurance provided. Apply to your college for internship credit.

Young Adult Service Communities www.ucc.org/volunteer_yasc
11 months; Ages 21-35; Placements for 2019-2020 happening now. Become a faith-based justice leader. Join local communities acting for affordable housing, immigration reform, public health, and racial justice. Serve at the intersection of faith communities and social justice. Reflect on action and be part of an intentional community. Housing, Living Stipend, and Health Insurance provided. Apply for student loan forbearance

---

Renew Alabama Hosts Environmental Justice Tour

Renew Alabama is hosting a statewide Environmental Justice tour to build a collective narrative with organizations, faith leaders and community leaders around environmental concerns. We will facilitate break out sessions on clean energy alternatives, community-owned power, pollution and health as well as skills building workshops on campaign development, building a strong team, mapping decision makers and effective storytelling. Through a process of knowledge sharing, skills building and envisioning a sustainable future we deserve, we hope to mobilize community leaders into

coordinated statewide action for environmental justice! These events are FREE and open to the public! Lunch, snacks and refreshments will be provided. Link to Facebook Event.

Scholarship for Individuals Studying to Become UCC Ministers

The Milnes Fund of Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC, was established in 1996 through a bequest from Jack and Marjory Milnes to provide scholarships for individuals studying to become ministers in the United Church of Christ. The award amount may be up to $3,000. The application should be submitted by June 9, 2019 for the spring semester. Learn more on our website.

"Retreat>Restore>Renew" Retreat in South Carolina

All Saints Lutheran Church in Mt Pleasant, SC is hosting a retreat from May 17-19 called *Retreat > Restore > Renew.* This ecumenical weekend is for Christians to be equipped for the care of God's creation. The retreat will engage participants in stewardship discussions and the exchange of ideas that will build up creation care ministries at home, the congregation, conference, and beyond. It will take place at the Coastal Retreat Center on the beautiful Isle of Palms (2101 Palm Blvd., Isle of Palms, SC). Learn more.

Conference Calendar

Board of Directors Meeting
April 4 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Staff Meeting
April 23 @ 9:00 am - 10:30 am EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Coffee with Char (Virtual Event)
April 30 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Coffee with Char (Virtual Event)
May 2 @ 10:00 am - 11:00 am EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Upper Room UCC Fellowship
May 18 @ 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm CDT
Howard Congregational Church, Nashville

Boundary Training
May 30 @ 1:00 pm - 8:00 pm CDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

MID Retreat
May 30 @ 10:00 am - May 31 @ 12:00 pm CDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

SEC UCC Annual Meeting
May 31 @ 12:00 pm - June 1 @ 4:00 pm EDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

UCC General Synod
June 21 - June 25
Milwaukee, WI

Contact Us

Conference Minister: **Rev. Char Burch;** cburch@secucc.org

Assoc. Conference Minister: **Rev. Heather Fosburgh;** hbardole@secucc.org

Generosity Coordinator: **Min. Carrole Moss;** cmoss@secucc.org

Director of Communications: **Don Harris;** dharris@secucc.org

Copyright © 2019 Southeast Conference, UCC, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.